

November 9th 2023

The Honorable Judge Paul G. Gardephe
United States Courthouse
40 Foley Square
New York, NY 1007

Dear Judge Gardephe,

Your Honor, I am writing this letter for my brother-in-law Robert Wisnicki, more affectionately known as Dovi Wisnicki.

Professionally I have spent over 15 years as a psychotherapist in Connecticut, concentrating on working with young adults, teenagers, and their parents to enhance communication within the family dynamics and, more importantly, within the individuals themselves. I have seen many individuals come to my office seeking to understand how and why they are having difficulties acclimating into their [new] roles in high school, university, and into the working world and trying to find confidence within themselves. One of the main focuses and goals of the therapeutic process is to assist individuals in helping them find their purpose and meaning in life and find a higher purpose within society. I believe that this is the key to successful individuals no matter what their ethnic, cultural, or religious beliefs may be. Leading a purposeful and meaningful life not only helps the individual but augments the individual's family, community, and society as a whole.

One of the most important traits that I assist a client in identifying traits to find fulfillment and meaning in life is looking for people whom they can model the needed behaviors after. While many studies are showing the importance of modeling behaviors and the impact that it has on young adults, finding the right role models can be an arduous and often rigorous task. When a child has a familial figure that they can follow and learn from, (this not only makes my job a bit easier) but because the client is often living within the home, this makes the behavior easier to observe and learn from. Vaughn and colleagues (2018) even found that when trying to help children eat healthier, modeling behaviors may be more influential than the parents' quality of diet itself!

While I cannot base my clientele on a specific family type or predict the type of parent the individual may be living with I can say the ideal parent would look similar to my brother-in-law Robert. From having a rigorous and structured daily schedule with a healthy balance of work, family, and self-care my brother-in-law epitomizes what it means to be a model parent and role model. Having married into the Wisnicki family 15 years ago I have been fortunate to have a role model of a brother-in-law in Robert and I can confidentially say that I am a better father and husband today by emulating what I have observed and seen in the daily behaviors of Robert. I feel privileged and honored by what I have learned from Robert. As important and as impactful as this lesson has been both personally and professionally, there is something that has left an even bigger impact on me and my family, especially over the past months.

Vaughn, A. E., Martin, C. L., & Ward, D. S. (2018). What matters most - what parents model or what parents eat? *Appetite*, 126, 102–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2018.03.025>

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Dr. Tovah Klein, Director of Barnard College Center for Toddler Development, and mentor of mine, talks about the importance of a parent apologizing. This teaches them that there “is always room to repair and reconnect, especially if they have hurt someone”. This is a trait that I have always struggled with and one that I am constantly working on with my wife and children. I feel so fortunate to have Robert as a brother-in-law and a role model in this area, as I have watched him deal with the public shame and embarrassment of his recent felonious actions. Robert, in his humility, acknowledges his wrongdoing and has taken full ownership of his actions. What he has personally experienced within this amazing and close-knit family, and within his community is, in itself a form of atonement and punishment. As I write this letter to you today Your Honor, I respectfully and humbly ask you to view my brother-in-law Robert with mercy and acknowledge his remorse and embarrassment as punishment. Being able to take responsibility and apologize for any action that had caused harm to others, is a trait that every parent and individual should work on. Robert has been a role model for me and many other family and friends in this area and has committed to rectifying his mistakes. Your Honor by viewing this situation with mercy, I believe that you can find it within your heart to give him the chance to continue to make an everlasting impact on the lives of the many impacted lives around him

Thank you for taking the time to reach this.

Humbly, and with respect,

Chananya Abraham
MA,MS, LPC